

Press On

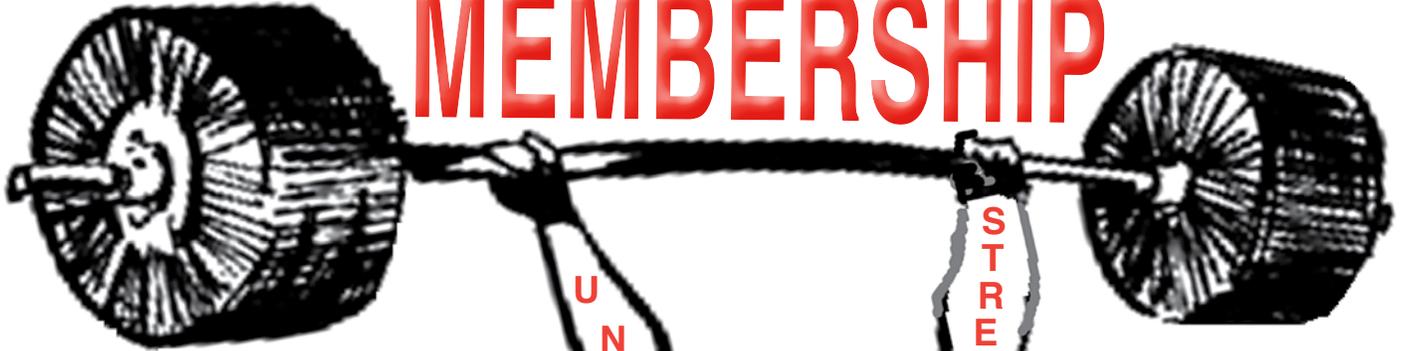
*St. Louis Gateway District Area Local
American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO*

Volume 92 Issue 4



July/August 2014

MEMBERSHIP



Attend your union meetings!

Get involved!

Write your congressman!



What is Wrong With the Postal Service?

By Frederick Wolfmeyer, President

Hello to my union sisters and brothers. I hope this article finds you and your families safe and in good health.

We constantly hear in the news or on the Internet about the poor financial shape of the U.S. Postal Service. Much has been written here and in other APWU newsletters about the need for legislation to remedy this financial crisis. We have all heard of Congressman Darrell Issa and his proposed legislation that would destroy the Postal Service and greatly hurt all bargaining agreements. We have all cheered Senator Bernie Sanders and his Senate bill 316 because it contained everything on our wish list. And we are all aware of our postmaster general and his seemingly determined efforts to cut services, cut the workforce, and take over our health insurance. And then there is the service's deal with Staples. Expand postal services to the public with counters in the Staples stores, but staff them with minimum wage non-postal workers.

We have been hearing about, talking about, protesting about, and calling our elected officials about this crisis since 2007, and yet it remains the same. The service claims it is going to run out of money very soon. On the Hill in Washington, D.C. ill-informed politicians talk about what to do and how they cannot 'bail out' the Postal Service. Even the president speaks of what should be done and yet strangely, nothing is done. Everyone recognizes that there is a crisis and there are several plans on how to fix the problem, however, here we sit awaiting a life line to pull the Postal Service up and keep it from drowning in the sea of the pre-funding mandate.

The Postal Service recently reported a \$1 billion operational profit for the fiscal year so far, good news right? However, the pre-funding mandate quickly turns that inside out and shows a deficit of over \$1 billion. In response the postmaster general stated that he wants to reduce the workforce by another 20,000 or more employees by 2015. Perhaps if he does, next year the operational profit will be \$2 billion and again turn around into a deficit by the ever present pre-funding mandate.

The service is caught in a downward spin and while it is not receiving the needed legislative help from Congress, postal management is doing little to reverse the trend. Here locally, we have seen supervisors and managers moved around like pieces on a chess board. We have also seen new faces brought in from out of town to work here in our instal-

lation, the NDC, and the associate offices. The faces seem to change every few months and in some instances weeks. Besides the costs associated with all this moving of people in and out of town, there is no stability or consistency within management thus keeping everything in a state of uncertainty. Perhaps this is management's

plan or perhaps it is just what it looks like, people stepping on each other trying to punch their resume ticket for self-advancement within a struggling company. Managers and supervisors get indignant when asked why there is so much movement, and they are quick to rebuke the person who is asking by claiming that they have a right to upward mobility and career enhancement. What they forget to mention is that this upward mobility and career enhancement comes with a price, a price most of them are willing to pay without blinking an eye. The price they pay is the loss of their ethics and integrity, but the gold ring of advancement and promotion surely outweighs that cost — right? Meanwhile violations of the contract run rampant and thousands of grievances continue to clog the system, all the while pulling this institution we know as the Postal Service further down.

Honesty and integrity are ideals that are lost on management. I have been lied to on so many occasions that I simply do not trust anyone in management. Even if an agreement is put in writing and the document signed, I still feel uneasy as if somehow management will violate it. We have seen this happen over the last few years with our contract. Language which seems clear is contested by management and the issue goes to arbitration. The award comes down on the side of the union and yet postal management will not comply. Of course not all of management has this view. Some in management want to abide by the contract, but they are restricted by upper management. Many of those to whom I have spoken, are fearful of reprisals for doing the right thing.

So, sisters and brothers, what do we do? It would be easy to point at those in upper management, especially the postmaster general, and at the politicians who just don't understand the real problem. However, that is not going to save this great institution — an institution that the people



of the United States like and trust. Every poll that has been taken by unions and independent organizations alike reveal that the American people like and want the Postal Service. They like it so much that it was shown recently to be the third most trusted organization in the United States. Congress and the Senate can't even come close to that.

Now I asked you earlier what can we do, and the answer is really simple. You all work the mail every day and have for many years and you know the value of the Postal Service. Yes it is a service that we provide to all Americans and we do it very well. What we can do and what I am asking of you is, do not become mired in the quicksand of negativity. If certain managers and big wigs want to punch their resume

ticket, so be it, we won't change them. What we need to do is show we are the better persons by taking the higher road and performing our jobs to the best of our ability. Show the American people that their trust is not misplaced and educate our families and friends so they can help fight this good fight. They are our allies and best resource in the battle to save the Postal Service and our jobs. Please continue to write your congressmen and senators, but have your friends and families do the same. Speak to your neighbors, people at the store, people at your church, and yes even your supervisors because their jobs depend on winning this battle too and tell them to join us in this fight to save the Postal Service. It can be done; it just takes you and me to do it.



Your Role in the Union

By Vice President Gene Hollenbeck

I have been thinking about this for some time now. I don't seem to understand why the younger employees hardly take an interest in what happens with their union. I don't understand why we struggle to have a quorum for a membership meeting. When will the membership become involved? Will it be before those involved now are gone? I hope so. This is **your** union. It is only as strong as you and your co-workers make it.

Now is the time to get involved. Come to a union meeting. Find out what is going on in **your** union. Come to new steward training in the fall.

Educate yourself. Find out your rights under your contract.

Be a set of eyes and ears. Let your union know what is going on in your workplace.

Show solidarity. Stand up for your co-workers and union.

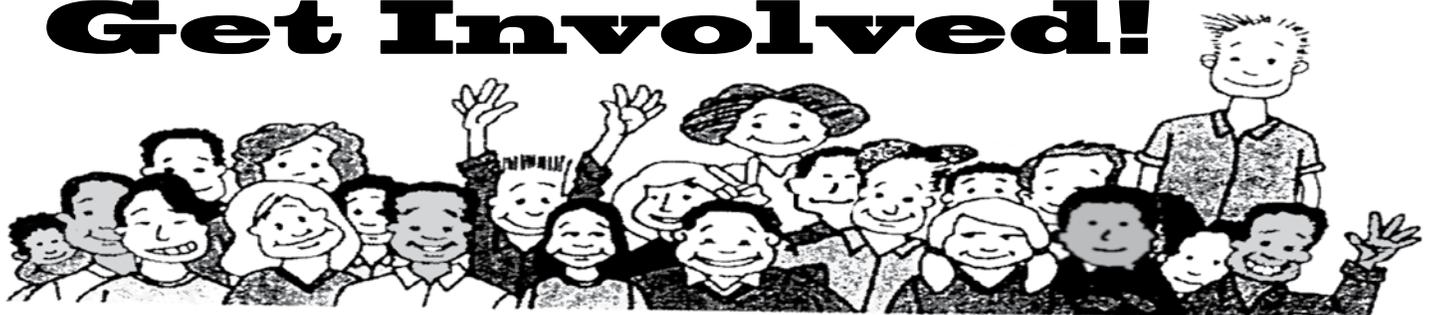
Get involved. Attend your membership meetings. Sign up a non-member today.

You have the power to make this union more effective. Help us help you. We are only as strong as our weakest link. Knowledge is power and we know the contract better than management.

I know that there are members out there just waiting for the right time to become involved. **That time is now.**

We are currently working on getting PSEs converted to career status. This is an ongoing battle with management. There are seven steps that must be completed before any PSE can be converted. Management has not notified us of where they are at in this process. We are continuing the battle and will notify the PSEs of the progress.

Get Involved!



Secretary Treasurer's Highlights

By Robin Robertson



Hello my brothers and sisters, pray all is well in everyone's house. Below are the May and June highlights from the general membership meetings for the St. Louis Gateway District Area Local. Please enjoy your summer general membership vacation. July and August there are no general membership meetings, please remember your presence and voice is needed for the fall months.

President Wolfmeyer

The annual union picnic will be held on Sunday, August 17, 2014, at the Aerospace Lodge in Hazelwood, Mo. just as it was last year. On Saturday, August 16, the Bar-B-Que workers will be grilling the pork steaks, burgers and sausages in advance of the picnic to be prepared for picnic day. If anyone is interested in volunteering, please call or see Picnic Chairperson Robin Robertson.

President Wolfmeyer received notification that the MPWU Fall Seminar will be held September 5 – 7, 2014, in Columbia, Mo. The hotel will be the Hampton Inn & Suites at the University of Missouri, 1225 Fellow's Place, Columbia, MO 65201, and Ph.: (573) 214-2222. President Wolfmeyer will provide more information on this seminar when it becomes available.

Vice President's Report

Vice President Gene Hollenbeck mentioned these last six months have been hectic dealing with management and the retreat rights for our clerks. Vice President Gene Hollenbeck's goal is to make sure management verifies and corrects any errors on those previous vacancies. Vice President Gene Hollenbeck will be looking at the AOs PSEs and maintenance PSEs in the AOs.

Vice President Gene Hollenbeck currently working on residuals set up for the conversions of PSEs to careers. This is going to be another battle with management. PSEs calling the Union Hall daily concerning when they are going to be converted to career employees. Maintenance PSEs were converted to career employees.

Secretary-Treasurer

Secretary-Treasurer Robin Robertson mentioned the delegates attending the National Convention need to make sure they have \$500 available on their debit card or credit card for incidental fees.

Secretary-Treasurer Robin Robertson attended the National President's Conference (NPC) in Atlanta. The NPC was very informative and interesting because most locals are having similar issues on PSE conversations and management not presenting proper documentation in order for the CSV conversion to EXCEL format using the MDAT program to calculate the hours where a full time position is needed

Research & Education

Director's Report:

Research & Educator Director Becky Livingston mentioned steward training is always the Monday following general membership meeting at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the Union Hall.

Industrial Relation's Report:

Industrial Relation's Director Melvin Sanders mentioned last June when we had a proposed constitution change. Two members, Ms. Protho and Mr. Anthony Harris had submitted a change regarding the same article and section, but the change they submitted was in violation of the National Constitution and could not be submitted to the membership.

Change was submitted to the membership in April 2014 and printed in the April/May *Press On* issue. **On June 14, 2014, the proposed constitution change was seconded, voted on, and passed by a standing vote of 22 for, 0 against.**

Maintenance Director's Report:

Maintenance Craft Director Tom Nanna is still dealing with overtime issues at the stations and branches, an ongoing issue since customer services took over the overtime scheduling from the plant. One employee in the last two plus years had 1300+ overtime hours and 100+ V-time and steward on the overtime list having only 47 hours overtime and 40-60 hours of V-time. All maintenance employees should be maximized to 60 hours of overtime.

Support Service's Director Report

Director Orlando Anderson announced that support services contract will be going to interest arbitration. Management and support services selected a neutral arbitrator and the lead negotiator, Phil Tabbita, is very pleased with the selection. Arbitration dates have been assigned.

Support services witnesses will be flying to Washington, D.C. in June and July. We want to give special thanks

and gratitude to all the support services craft employees who interviewed on their own personal time.

Door Prizes

The \$50 door prize was won by: Robert Cook (MVS craft) and Jeffrey Cooper (MVS craft).

There was COPA 50/50 drawing won by David Rubino (maintenance craft) and Shirley Orr (clerk craft). TV raffle won by Charles Koperstynski (maintenance craft)



We're on the Eve of Destruction

By Melvin Sanders

Director of Industrial Relations

Last year my son, who has about 18 years of postal seniority, asked me for the first time my opinion concerning the future of the Postal Service. For some strange reason I started singing a phrase from the 1965 song "Eve of Destruction" (I changed a couple of words).

Don't you understand what I'm trying to say?

Can't you feel the fears I'm feeling today?

If the button is pushed there is no running away

There will be no one to save with the post office in a grave

Take a look around you boy ... it's bound to scare you boy

Tell me over and over again my friend ... you don't believe we're on the eve of destruction

He sat there quietly for about two minutes. I thought he was thinking deeply about what I said and how I had so elegantly put it in to song. Then he got up and said "... see you later dad."

Later I heard he told his brother, "Watch out, dads singing old songs that nobody understands again."

Well I know a lot of you are probably looking at me the same way ... saying what is the old buzzard talking about. Look the song up on the internet. You will find if things don't change, the song is perfect for our situation.

And you tell me
Over and over and over again my friend
Ah, you don't believe
We're on the eve of destruction

Jobs that are Slipping Away

I recently read an article titled "Jobs that are Slipping Away ... and Those that are Here to Stay." I just have to share this with the rest of you.

Career that's slipping away # 1 ... Postal Service Clerks

Likelihood of computerization 95 percent

Before email and online postage sites most people couldn't communicate without these workers. Postal Service clerks are the people who sell money orders, stamps, envelopes, and other mailing related products, along with calculating postage and answering postal questions, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Bleak Outlook Factor

As automated bill pay and email use increase, the subsequent decline in first class mail volume will adversely affect employment ... says the Department of Labor. The sad part about this is so-called experts have stated, "The volume of mail going through the postal system has decreased over the years with the increased use of email. That's not going to change. More people are emailing documents and mailing letters less."

This may be why employment of Postal Service clerks is projected to decline 32 percent from 2012 to 2022 representing a loss of 139,000 jobs.

There goes the **grand alliance**.



We have all heard about the dire straits the Postal Service is in. We have all heard on the news or read on the Internet about our financial crisis. The prospects for the Postal Service seem dim. This should be of great concern for all postal employees and their families. This concern should translate into action. Ask yourself this question, "Have I done all I can to help preserve the Postal Service?" Have you written to Congress? Have you asked your friends and family to contact their senators and representatives? When there is a rally, do you participate? In an election, do you get out and vote for candidates who support the Postal Service? Do I attend at least one union meeting a year?

Most of us lead busy lives. Most people have children and/or grandchildren for which they are responsible. We have leisure activities that we enjoy and hobbies that keep us busy. There just isn't a lot of free time. If postal workers don't watch out, we will have a lot more free time because we won't have jobs. I know you've heard it all before, but so far nothing has happened, right? Nothing has happened to you. Your false sense of security, your lack of incentive to do anything may allow negative changes to creep up on you and catch you napping. I have heard horror stories about plant closures and excessing from all across the country. We are not immune.

I have heard it before, "What do I pay union dues for?" or "Let the union deal with the problem." All the dues-paying members support the local and national organizations. You pay your dues and should have the expectation of quality representation. More is needed if we are to maintain our jobs. Simply put, you should be eager and willing to do all that is within your power to save your job. Sitting on the sidelines is just not going to do. Waiting for someone else to get involved is not going to work.

We all must become proactive. If you see a supervisor performing your work, file a grievance. If the opportunity arises for you to participate in a union meeting, rally, picket, or action, come on out. Even if it's only for 20 minutes, you at least made an effort. The Labor Day Parade is quickly approaching. Every year I am dismayed at our poor turnout. Other unions have their whole local

participate in the parade. People bring their kids, dogs, neighbors and friends to the parade. They take pride in their union and recognize that most of the benefits that they enjoy were fought for and won by a union. We have over 1,600 members in this local. We are lucky if we get 20 people to show up for the Labor Day Parade. Most of those people are stewards and officers of the local and the "faithful few." We need to make a better showing. We want people to support us in our fight to keep the Postal Service as we know it. How do you expect the public to support our efforts if we don't? Giving up a couple of hours on a holiday is a small sacrifice to make for job security.

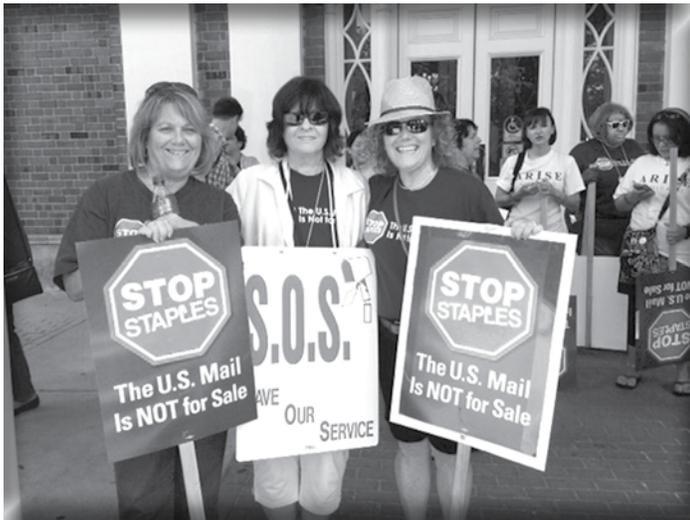
The union meeting is your opportunity to voice your concerns, to find out what is happening both on the local and national level and to express yourself. We only have 10 meetings a year. Rather than complaining to your co-workers about an injustice, come to the meeting and let your officers know how you feel and what's going on. Maybe you have a suggestion that could help to solve a problem. Don't just sit there, get involved. The body, those at the union meeting, has the final say in what goes on, what monies are spent and what resolutions are passed. Don't you want to have a say in how the local is run?

Look, I know you don't want to be beat over the head. But losing the Postal Service is a real possibility. Most people 30 years ago would not have believed that major auto plants would close, that Famous Barr would no longer exist, pay phones would disappear, or any of the other changes that cost people their jobs. Seen any ads for elevator operators or blacksmiths lately? A word to the wise should be sufficient. Just ask yourself, "**Have I done all that I can?**"



From the Desk of
Becky Livingston
Research and Education Director

I recently was asked to join the Local Organizing Committee for the Midwest School for Women Workers that was held June 22 – 26, 2014. During the planning phases I was able to set aside an hour of the week to address the future of the Postal Service. Every year



the MSWW plans a day of action and the Stop Staples campaign was perfect for this project. During the first few days of the school the ladies gathered information, contacted local news and radio stations and created new rally chants that can be used in future rallies. On June 26, 2014, we rallied at the local Staples store. Linda Turney, APWU NBA from Chicago and Clare Brook, APWU executive vice president for the state of Illinois were kind enough to accept an invitation from the MSWW to join me on the panel discussing the Postal Service then participated in the rally later that afternoon. This school of Labor & Employment Relations is a great way to network and form friendships with women from different unions and I found the support from teachers, electrical workers, labor educators, CLUW and the Chicago Transit Authority, to name a few. Very encouraging. The only way we can gather support for the Stop Staples campaign is take the story to the streets. Reach out to your friends and family and attend schools like the Midwest School for Women Workers and encourage them to stop going to Staples stores for supplies. I think Staples is going to be in for a big surprise this fall when everyone goes back to school after buying their supplies at a Staples competitor. Let's see how they like it!

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Another Perspective

By Fred Wolfmeyer, President

St. Louis Gateway DAL

Sisters and brothers, you may have seen the recent article in *The American Postal Worker* written by our national president, Mark Dimondstein. It touches upon several topics: the Stop Staples campaign and the untruths being put out by our PMG regarding the Staples issue; the recent MOU regarding the filling of residual vacancies, and his point of view on a union's mission. In his article, President Dimondstein takes issue with the point of view that a union's primary function is representation and states that, "This narrows the necessary scope of our union." He further states that, "A union's mission is far greater than the vital work of negotiating contracts and enforcing them through grievances." He then writes of the auto workers engaged in a sit-down strike in 1936 at GM in Flint, Michigan, and the Postal Workers unlawful strike in 1970. This history is important to remember and it shows how workers can band together and organize to win the right to bargain with management and secure a collective bargaining agreement which provides good wages and benefits and allows them a path for workplace justice and fair play and that path is the grievance/arbitration process. As President Dimondstein wrote, "... they were using their collective strength to win some real workers' power in the workplace — a true voice at work, an end to favoritism, a living wage." They achieved this when they got management to come to the bargaining table.

I don't believe that my fellow

APWU presidents, officers, NBAs, or members believe that negotiation or grievance processing are the primary functions of the APWU or any other union. However, that being said, negotiation helps us obtain our workplace rights and grievance processing is a very vital function of any union because that is how we, as a labor organization, police our contract and protect the negotiated rights of our members.

President Dimondstein also writes that, "Too often I hear the view that the primary function of our union is 'representation,' meaning contract negotiations and grievance processing." Personally, I do believe that representation is our primary function, our bread and butter. But, I also believe that representation is more than negotiating contracts, grievance processing, or policing contracts. I believe that representation can also be termed as opportunity. How is it an opportunity? While representing the members there is an opportunity to speak with them, listen to them, instruct them.

We should see representation as an opportunity to show non-members that we care about the union, the contract, and the members and in doing so we have an opportunity to organize them or plant the seed of interest in the union. We should see representation as an opportunity to protest, rally, or reach out to other unions to seek help from them or offer help to them. We should see representation as an opportunity to show our members that we do not make sweetheart deals but

rather represent them with honesty and integrity. Representation has many faces and we as union leaders should seek out all the opportunities it presents to us and use them to strengthen our union.

Representation provides us with opportunities to educate our members and non-members alike about the contract, issues like Staples, and how to draw attention to our issues from our elected officials. When I was in Washington, D.C. in March of 2013 for the APWU Presidents' Conference, I had the opportunity to represent my membership and the APWU legislatively by taking our concerns to Missouri's congressmen and senators. I was literally taking our fight, the fight of our national union and my local union, to the halls of Congress or putting it another way, I had the opportunity to 'represent' my union and members in a legislative matter.

Looking at 'representation' in the ways I have listed above ensures a union leader does not put all his or her eggs into one basket, to quote the old adage. We must take advantage of all opportunities and represent in many different ways whether it be grievances, legislation, negotiations, rallies, or protests. We, as union members and leaders, must embrace opportunity and be careful to not get caught up in the false notion that representation is not our primary function because it is. In conclusion, representation presents itself in many different ways, and if the opportunity for representation is there to "take it to the streets," do it, just don't leave it there.

Support Services Report

By Orlando Anderson

Director IT/ASC and Support Services



Greetings brothers and sisters of Support Services. I want to first apologize for my absence from this newsletter since being graciously voted in as your director. I thank all of you for the opportunity to represent and to serve you. Within days of swearing in, I was off to Washington, D.C. to be a part of IT/AS contract committee. During September and October of 2013, I made several trips to Washington, D.C. to assist in the negotiations. In addition to the contract negotiations, I have also been involved with the grievance process and have obtained several settlements. I also attended the eight state conference, the all craft conference, and assisted with workman's comp and safety issues. I had the pleasure of attending a labor law class that lasted several weeks. I helped to prepare a resolution to be presented at this year's National Convention, to be held in Chicago. If this resolution is passed it will create a national business agent for Support Services.

Contract Negotiations

The current contract expired in 2011. Due to a variety of reasons, negotiations did not go smoothly. Talks began in 2011 but then stalled. The Postal Service walked away from the bargaining table. During their exodus from the talks, many of the members from the post office negotiations team resigned or retired. Accounting help desk manager, James Page, was one of many who retired in the middle of the process. This made it very difficult for the parties to meet because there wasn't a postal party to meet with. Even though we got a new Postal Service negotiations team, talks stalled because there were no seasoned negotiators.

In late 2013 the union filed national labor board charges against the Postal Service that forced them to return to the table. (Most of you remember an email that stated what the Postal Service would do, signed by labor relations specialist Sue Mercado). Although they did return to the table, they were unwilling to address the union proposals. It was during this time we went through the VERA (early out) process.

In August of 2013 the negotiations began again, but there was little progress. The parties then agreed to seek a mediator (mediation) as opposed to (arbitration). The mediator was not successful during the talks. It was during this time I came on board as a member of the negotiations team. After the mediator's efforts failed, the union again filed Labor Board charges. The Postal Service decided they wanted to negotiate but the union committee decided to go to arbitration.

As I write this article, I am in a hotel room in Washington, D.C.

with ongoing negotiations/arbitration. On June 24, 2014, opening statements were presented to the arbitrator by both parties. Even though the arbitration process has begun, a settlement can still be achieved via negotiations between the parties. It looks like we are very close to a settlement through negotiations. In fact, by the time this article is released, we may have a tentative agreement. That agreement must be ratified by you, the members. If a negotiated agreement is ratified, the contract would expire in January 2016. We would have 18 months before we would be back at the table to negotiate the next contract. If we do not get a negotiated agreement, the arbitration process would continue. The decision may not come until sometime in September 2014. Ratification would not be needed since the arbitrator's decision is final and binding. In preparation for arbitration, several members from IT and AS were selected, through an interview process, to go to DC as potential witnesses. They will address your concerns from IT, Accounting Help Desk and Accounting Services.

National Business Agent

A resolution will be presented to the delegates at the National Convention that will provide Support Services with a national business agent, if passed. This position will assist the current national director with his workload. You may not be aware that Support Services is more than IT and Accounting Services. We negotiate and support contracts for nine other entities. The Postal Nurses, IT and Accounting Services, and several independent trucking services all have contracts to be negotiated under the umbrella of Support Services. Support Services represent APWU member in every state. In addition to the contracts, our national director, Steven Brooks also handles Step 3 grievances and arbitrations for all that fall under support services. This is a lot for one person to handle. Steven Brooks is attempting to dig us out of a backlog of cases. He is currently addressing grievances at step 3 that were filed in 2007, 2008 and 2009. So when you inquire about the status of your grievance filed in 2011 or 2012 or 2013, now maybe you understand the delay. Steve needs help. Every other craft has more than one national business agent. I encourage the delegates from the St. Louis Gateway District Area Local to support this resolution when presented in Chicago. Without this position, grievances will be as they currently are, waiting to be heard.

I want to thank you for your time, your patience, and your loyalty. Not to me, but to the cause. Please come to the general membership meeting where further information will be provided.

The Post Office During the Civil War

By Vicky House, Oxford Historian

The post office and the Civil War — not two subjects you would expect to find in the same sentence. However, the U.S. Post Office (Northern) and the Confederate States of America Post Office (Southern) could have been described as a ‘war within a war.’

Long before the Civil War even began and as early as the early 1850s, the North was sending circulars and covers (what we now refer to as envelopes) containing propaganda to the South. The purpose was to discourage secession and deflate the egos of the southerners who thought a civil war would only last a very short time.

In March 1861, President Lincoln appointed Montgomery Blair as Postmaster General of the U.S. Post Office and a member of his newly formed cabinet. Blair was a difficult man and disliked by other members of Lincoln’s cabinet. However, a stubborn, opinionated and generally disliked man, was what Lincoln felt was needed to deal with the new Confederate government.

Also in March 1861, Provisional President Jefferson Davis appointed John H. Reagan as Postmaster General of the Confederate Post Office. Reagan was not like Blair, but he was resourceful. He became known as “the man who stole the U.S. Post Office.” Reagan sent a courier with letters to the U.S. Post Office in Washington, D.C. The letters were to request any employee of the U.S. Post Office who was southern born or believed strongly

in the southern way of life, to leave their post and come work for the new Confederate government. Not only did most of the people leave, they took with them receipt books, account ledgers, maps and routes back to the South.

Provisional President Davis gave Reagan just two years (March 1861 to March 1863) to make the southern Post Office self-sufficient. Immediately, Reagan raised the postal rates — even higher than those of the north. It cost five cents to send a letter weighing ½ ounce and under 500 miles and ten cents for a letter weighing ½ ounce and over 500 miles. Circulars and drop letters were two cents each while an express mail letter could cost the sender between \$5 and \$6.

Reagan also placed ads in southern and northern newspapers and circulars requesting proposals from printing companies to provide the necessary postal supplies. A company from downstate New York won the bid, but when Fort Sumter was fired upon, the proposal was withdrawn and a southern company was awarded the job. Southern printing companies were not set up or ready to take on the additional responsibilities of providing the supplies and so, stamps were not readily available. It took several months before the South had postage stamps and, even then, the supply was limited.

Montgomery Blair fired back at the southern post office by demanding all northern postage stamps be

returned immediately. Most of the southern postmasters refused to return the stamps and continued using them. Blair again retaliated by taking any mail from the south with northern postage and marking it “out of date postage” and sent it to the dead letter office.

Communication was vital during the Civil War and the post office was the main source for relaying information. The telegraph service was not as dependable as both sides took turns cutting the wires and destroying the service. Mail did not always get through as easily and quickly as one would think. The North did its best to cut off the supply lines to the South with checkpoints and ships blockading the ports.

The envelope played a big part in the Civil War — far more than a cover for a letter. The printing companies from both sides saw the opportunity to utilize the space on an envelope to spread their propaganda. Envelopes were printed with patriotic images, heroes, traitors, contraband, political ambition, prison camps, hospitals, regimental units, camp life, generals, etc. Prisoner of war letters were given special treatment and exchanged only at certain checkpoints. This practice was stopped after about a year since neither side could trust the other. A letter from home to a soldier in the field would sometimes reveal more to him than its contents because of the design of the envelope.

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U.S. Post Office Postage Stamps

Confederate States of America Postage Stamps



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St. Louis Gateway District Area Local**

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Chair Person



APWU ANNUAL PICNIC

The APWU Annual Picnic will be Sunday, August 17, 2014, at the Aerospace Lodge located at 212 Utz Lane in Hazelwood, Mo. near the intersection of Lindbergh and I-270. Please RSVP if you plan to attend and limit your number of guests to six.

Name _____ Work Location/Office _____

Number of guests _____

There is a limit of six (6) guests per member.

Cut out and return to: Robin Robertson, 1705 S. Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63104



PSEs Should Beware of ‘Voice of Employee’ Surveys

Postal support employees should beware of management’s latest ploy, union leaders are warning: Beginning in April, the Postal Service plans to ask non-career employees to take the Voice of the Employee (VOE) surveys.

Management is after a lot more than meets the eye, according to APWU Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy. “What management won’t tell you is that historically the USPS has used the Voice of the Employee data against workers at the negotiating table,” she said. The surveys have been a point of contention between the USPS and APWU since 1998, when management first cited survey data during bargaining; the APWU National Executive Board responded by adopting a resolution opposing “the use of surveys, focus groups, polls, audits, as a means of interviewing employees and union officials to evaluate job-related and internal issues.”

Since the surveys are voluntary, PSEs can decline to complete them

— just as career employees do. “If you are handed the survey, remember, it is your mail and you do not have to turn it over to the manager. You can take it home, you can throw it out, or you can turn it in to the union,” Szeredy said.

“Management may try to entice you to take the survey on the clock and grant you 15 minutes to participate.” She added. “But employees should remember: No one is forced to complete the survey. It is voluntary!”

The Postal Service misrepresents the results of surveys, Szeredy said, noting that executive bonuses are based on the results of performance tracking, which includes results from the Voice of the Employee survey. Performance cluster that meet targets, including VOE results, are celebrated as “break-through performers,” she said.

In a March 19 letter to the APWU, the USPS says the responses by non-career employees *will be used to establish a new baseline for all employees in the fiscal year 2015*. “2015 is the year of our contract negotiations,” Szeredy pointed out. “Need we say more? Let’s

not give them any baseline. Boycott the Voice of the Employee survey. If the USPS really cared about non-career employees wouldn’t they have offered better wages, decent benefits and a true path to career employment in the last negotiations?”

Employees who have questions and/or feel pressure to complete the survey, see your local union representative immediately, she said.



VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY

JUST SAY NO!

Property of Branch 343

**Need Help Completing Your
Retirement Forms?
Don't Leave Anything to Chance**

Call

Melvin Sanders

314-231-7665

And make an appointment



Postal Workers Building Corporation

Annual Meeting

Wednesday

October 8, 2014

4:30 p.m.

1705 S. Broadway

Show Your Union Pride at the Annual LABOR DAY PARADE

Monday, September 1, 2014

Come on out and support your union!

Meet at the Union Hall at 8:30 a.m.
Refreshments will be served after the parade.



Anderson, Shaleya
Campbell, Joi
Cleggett, Kenya
Deister, Donald Jr.
Dyson, Sean
Harris, Cecelia
Hill, Dorothy
Holman, Michael
Hood, Mya
Hughes, Danielle
Hughes, Robert
Jones, Shyroyce
Kowalczyk, Venus
Lucas, Edith

Mallory, Marie
Mangun, Michael
Minor, Brenda
Moore, Shawntela
Neal, Zina
Page, Eric
Reed, Eddra
Sampy, Joshua
Stovall, Alvin
Walker, Lisa
Washington, Corey
Webb, Sahaar
Wood, Temple



We Wish to Extend
Our Condolences to
the Friends and
Families of:

Grady Lemon

Brother of Gladys Donnell
Accounting Service Center

Algen (Al) Ammons

Father of Bretina Harris
Accounting Help Desk

Gene Meyer

Father in law of Chris Alvarado
Maintenance

Jackie Collins

Retired Clerk

Joseph T. Ozier

Father of Adrienne Myles-Taylor
Support Services

Robert Krehbiel

Father-in-law of Frederick Wolfmeyer
President of St. Louis Area Gateway District Local

Lavante Quavase Kelly

Son of Keith Taylor
Maintenance-ET

GET INVOLVED!
ATTEND YOUR
UNION MEETINGS!
IF YOU WON'T,
WHO WILL?

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
ACCOUNTING SERVICES
(for GATEWAY DISTRICT)

Announcement

Announcement

IN-SERVICE EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

741/744 ACCOUNTING EXAMINATION

OPENING DATE: JULY 1, 2014

CLOSING DATE: AUGUST 15, 2014

Accounting is affording an opportunity for reassignment or promotion to **ALL** eligible employees. An on-line Accounting Examination will be held soon.

POSITIONS:

Positions requiring the 741 Accounting Junior Examination located in the St Louis IT/AS (Information Technology/Accounting Services).

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXAMINATION:

THIS EXAMINATION IS OPEN TO ALL CAREER EMPLOYEES ONLY, BOTH FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE, REGARDLESS OF CRAFT.

SCORING STANDARDS:

A minimum total score of 70 is required to attain a rating of "Eligible" on the Accounting Examination.

EXAMINATION:

The applicant will receive information via email provided, regarding time and place of the examination.

This Accounting Exam is off-the-clock.

(MORE INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THE NEXT PAGE)

741/744 ACCOUNTING EXAM APPLICATION FORM

Complete all boxes. Please print clearly and legibly. If you do not print clearly, you may miss out on this testing opportunity. All information is required; incomplete forms will not be accepted.

This completed form must be submitted to the address below and postmarked NO LATER THAN THE DATE LISTED on the EXAM ANNOUNCEMENT.

Post Office:

Supervisor's
Name:

Employee ID Number:*	EIN	
First Name:		
Middle Name:		
Last Name:		
Phone (XXX-XXX-XXXX):		
Email Address:**		
Mailing Address:		
City:		Send this completed form to: ACCOUNTING SERVICES ATTN: LINDA GRAMES PO BOX 80400 ST LOUIS MO 63180-0400
State:		
ZIP Code + 4 (XXXXX-XXXX):		

* You can find your USPS Employee Identification Number on your pay stub.

** Make sure to include your entire email address (for example, joe@yahoo.com). **All instructions to take the assessment and your test score will be sent to this email address.** You may use a personal email or Postal email address. If you do not have an email address, you may, at your own discretion, use the email address of someone who agrees to receive the messages and give them to you. All applicants must complete the entire assessment process within 14 days of when the first email message is sent; no exceptions will be made. **Applicants who do not complete the assessment process within the allotted 14 days will not be considered.**

Please Note: Those who attain an 'eligible' score will receive a copy of the St Louis Accounting Services Job Posting at the email you provided. Please address ALL of the Requirements on the Job Posting and mail to the address listed on the Job Posting.

St. Louis Gateway APWU
1705 S. Broadway
St. Louis, MO 63104
Address Service Requested

PRST STD
US Postage
PAID
St. Louis, MO
Permit No. 860

Press On

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Sheila Patton-Harris ... Editor
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Office Hours
Monday-Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday: 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Steward Booths, Downtown
Clerk ... 314-436-5331
Maintenance ... 314-436-4668
MVS ... 314-436-5027

GATEWAY LOCAL CALENDAR

July 14 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
August 6 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
August 11 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
August 17 (Sunday)	Family Day Picnic (1 p.m.-5 p.m.)
September 1 (Monday)	Labor Day Holiday
September 10 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
September 14 (Sunday)	General Membership Meeting (3 p.m.)
September 15 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
October 8 (Wednesday)	Annual PWBC Shareholder Meeting (4:30 p.m.)

There will be no General Membership Meetings
in the months of July and August.

The Union Hall will be closed on holidays.



Moving?
Send us your new address
so we can stay in touch.

Help Nancy, our office secretary, by sending us your address changes. Your union spends many work hours and pays significant postage fees to obtain your correct address. We cannot get your union paper to you on time without your correct address. Thank you.